

DEVELOPING AN EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN  
FOR THE CITY OF RIVERSIDE

LEADING COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

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## Abstract

The problem was that the City of Riverside did not have an Emergency Operations Plan for the city resulting in the city being unprepared for a disaster response and in violation of law. The purpose of this research paper was to develop an action plan that provided the necessary criteria for the creation of an Emergency Operations Plan for the City of Riverside.

This was an action research project. The research questions were:

1. What federal and state standards should be followed in developing an Emergency Operations Plan?
2. What framework should be used in the design of an Emergency Operations Plan?
3. Who should be involved in the development of an Emergency Operations Plan?
4. What specific emergencies should be included in an Emergency Operations Plan?

Research was conducted through literature review, feedback instrument and personal contacts. 26 feedback instruments were received and eight interviews were conducted with emergency planners from local, county and state agencies.

The results showed that an Emergency Operations Plan must be developed for the City of Riverside to come into compliance with law. The plan must be in compliance with the Stafford Act and the National Incident Management System. The State of Ohio plan development guide should be used in the development of the plan. A process was identified to develop a plan which includes assigning a Planning Coordinator and organizing a Planning Team, complete a hazard analysis, conduct a capability assessment, reviewing existing laws, plans and procedures, writing the plan, exercising the plan, and revising the plan.

It was recommended that the City of Riverside initiate the identified process of developing and Emergency Operations Plan.

## Table of Contents

Abstract	2
Table of Contents	3
Introduction	4
Background and Significance	4
Literature Review	6
Procedures	11
Results	14
Discussion	19
Recommendations	22
References	24
Appendix A (Recommended Action Plan)	26
Appendix B (Feedback Instrument)	28

## Introduction

The City of Riverside is a municipality that was incorporated in 1994. It provides many services to its 30,000 citizens including law enforcement, fire protection, EMS service, and street service to name a few.

The problem is that the City of Riverside currently does not have an Emergency Operations Plan for the city resulting in the city being unprepared for a disaster response and in violation of law. The purpose of this research paper is to develop an action plan that provides the necessary criteria for the creation of an Emergency Operations Plan for the City of Riverside.

This is an action research project. The research questions are:

1. What federal and state standards should be followed in developing an Emergency Operations Plan?
2. What framework should be used in the design of an Emergency Operations Plan?
3. Who should be involved in the development of an Emergency Operations Plan?
4. What specific emergencies should be included in an Emergency Operations Plan?

## Background and Significance

The City of Riverside is located in southwest Ohio on the east side of Dayton in Montgomery County. It became a city in 1994 when the village of Riverside merged with Mad River Township in response to annexation activity by the City of Dayton.

The government structure is comprised of six councilpersons and one mayor that are elected by popular vote. They in turn appoint a city manager that is responsible for all the staff and business of the city. The City Manager also acts as the Public Safety Officer as needed.

Under the City Manager are department directors. These departments include police, fire, public services and finance. Because the City of Riverside has a small administrative

capability, some services are provided by Montgomery County at the direction of the City Manager.

Currently there is no Emergency Operations Plan to respond to a disaster in the city. This places the city in violation of Ohio Revised Code 5502.27.1(B). This law states that the chief executive of the city must cause the “development of an all-hazards emergency operations plan that has been coordinated with all agencies, boards, and divisions having emergency management functions within the political subdivision”.

The passage of the “Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act” further highlights the critical need of an Emergency Operations Plan for the city. This act was passed on October 30, 2000 which one of its goals was to encourage “the development of comprehensive disaster preparedness and assistance plans, programs, capabilities, and organizations by the States and by local governments” (Robert, 2000). Failure to follow this act places federal funding in jeopardy during times of disaster.

This Applied Research Project (ARP) related to the United States Fire Administration’s Operational Goals by developing “a comprehensive emergency operations plan providing for an intra- and intercommunity response appropriate for identical risks” (USFA Training Catalog). The City of Riverside has realized the need to develop an Emergency Operations Plan.

This ARP relates to the elements of an action plan taught in Leading Community Risk Reduction course. The basic elements of an action plan consist of five words: who, what, when, where, and how. If each of these elements is considered while not losing sight of the purpose of the research, “the action plan will lead to reasonable solutions in a manageable timeframe” (Leading, 2003. p. SM 5-27).

## Literature Review

### *Question 1 - What federal and state standards should be followed in developing an Emergency Operations Plan?*

The federal standard for developing an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) can be found in a document from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. It is entitled “SLG-101: Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning”. Although this document is dated September 1996, it continues to be recognized as the nationally guiding document for EOPs that are developed at the state, county and local levels.

SLG-101 suggests a four-step process to follow when developing an EOP. These steps include research, development, validation and maintenance. Research looks at current laws, policies and mutual aid agreements, conducts a risk analysis, and determines local capabilities and resources. The data collected during the research step is developed into an EOP. The validation step has the plan reviewed and tested by emergency responders. The maintenance step corrects problems found during validation, implements the plan, and conducts annual review, testing and revision. A planning team representing the various functions of the organization conducts these steps.

The State of Ohio mirrors this guide with a document entitled “Plan Development and Review Guidance for Local Emergency Operations Plans”. “To assist in the development and maintenance of the local EOPs, this guidance was established to outline the planning process and identify what information must be contained in each EOP” (Plan Development, 2003. p. 1). It does not replace SLG 101 document, but serves as a supplement to it.

In Section A of this State of Ohio guide, it gives a standard planning process that should be followed to develop an EOP. “Developing or revising any emergency plan includes five key

tasks: completing a Hazard Analysis, conducting a Capability Assessment, reviewing Existing Plans/Procedures, organizing a Planning Team, and revising the Plan. These are the common steps routinely mentioned in most federal and private planning guides” (Plan Development, 2003. p. 2). The fourth step of organizing the planning team includes the writing of the EOP document. Once the plan is developed, the guidance recommends an additional step of routinely exercising the plan to keep the plan current.

One plan that was approved in December 2004 is the National Response Plan. This plan was developed in response to the “Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, Management of Domestic Incidents”. “The end result is vastly improved coordination among Federal, State, local and tribal organizations to help save lives and protect America’s communities by increasing the speed, effectiveness, and efficiency of incident management” (National Response, 2004. p. i). Although this plan is written on a national perspective, it does serve as the most recent and comprehensive standard of an EOP.

The National Incident Management System is another standard to consider when developing an EOP. This system was approved on March 1, 2004 and developed in response to Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5. “This system will provide a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, local and tribal governments to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity” (National Incident, 2004). Both new and existing EOPs will have to incorporate this new standard in the content and in practice.

*Question 2 - What framework should be used in the design of an Emergency Operations Plan?*

The history of the EOP format goes back to the Civil Preparedness Guide 1-8, “Guide for the Development of State and Local Emergency Operations Plans”. This guide was then

superceded in 1996 by the SLG-101 to give guidance to state and local agencies in the development of their EOPs. SLG-101 states that planners should “develop a rough draft of the basic plan, functional annexes, and hazard-specific appendices to serve as a point of departure for the planning team” (1996. p. 2-11). These three components have been shown to be the standard framework that has been used in the development of EOPs.

There are several other formats that are cited in the State of Ohio plan development guide. One is the “Emergency Phase Format” which is loosely based on the five phases of a disaster. These phases are divided up into the five chapters of the plan that include:

1. Basic Plan
2. Preparedness
3. Response
4. Recovery
5. Hazard Specific Procedures

“This format allows each plan holder to read and see the ‘whole picture’ as it relates to each emergency phase” (Plan Development, 2003. p. 12).

The “Disaster Specific Format” addresses procedures in terms of the types of hazards that may impact the local jurisdiction. This would be developed following an all-hazard analysis of the jurisdiction and then placing those hazards into the corresponding general headings of the plan. These include:

1. Basic Plan
2. Natural Hazards
3. Man-Made Hazards
4. Technological Hazards



“A possible negative to this format is that it may require each chapter to repeat some basic information on how to manage a given response task” (Plan Development, 2003. p. 14).

The “Agency Specific Format” is divided into three sections, which include:

1. Basic Plan
2. Response and Support Agency
3. Hazard Specific Procedures

These sections address “response procedures by separately addressing the tasks that each individual agency will implement during a response” (Plan Development, 2003. p. 14).

SLG-101 guide provides a format to follow in the development of an EOP. “It replaced FEMA’s CPG 1-8 manual, which was used to draft the majority of county EOPs back in the 1980’s and early 1990’s” (Plan Development, 2003. p. 8). It contains three sections including a basic plan, annexes and appendices.

The last format that is becoming more widely used is the “Emergency Support Functions (ESF) Format”. This is the format that is used by the Federal Response Plan, the Ohio Emergency Operations Plan and the Montgomery County, Ohio Emergency Operations Plan. The ESF is the key difference between this format and the others cited. This is critical because “the ESF is the primary mechanism through which county, state and federal assistance is provided to local governments during emergencies” (Montgomery, 2003. p. BP-1).

### *Question 3 - Who should be involved in the development of an Emergency Operations Plan?*

When deciding who should be involved in the development of an EOP, it is important to realize that the plan cannot be effectively written without the input from others. “Experience shows that plans that have been prepared by only one person or one agency are not used” (NRT-

1, 2001. p. 15). The emergency planner should not fool himself in to believing that this process can be accomplished alone.

It is important that “the planning team should be drawn from various groups that have a role or stake in emergency response” (SLG-101, 1996. p. 2-2). The emergency manager may serve or appoint someone to serve as the planning coordinator. This coordinator should then ensure that a good cross section of agencies is represented to serve on a planning team. SLG-101 gives an extensive list of individuals that may be asked for input for the planning process.

The core group of people that will make the final decisions as to the contents of the plan will lie with community leaders. “Local risk and emergency managers must work together with public safety personnel, administrative agency heads, schools and community service staff to create a coherent community protection plan” (Hatch, 2000. p. 2). This highlights the fact that the final plan is not a plan solely to protect city government, but to protect the community as a whole. “Planning must also involve the emergency response agencies that will be a part of your overall program” (Fagel, 2000. p. 7).

*Question 4 - What specific emergencies should be included in an Emergency Operations Plan?*

One of the first steps in the process of developing an EOP is identifying the types of emergencies that a jurisdiction may face. This step is accomplished by conducting an all-hazard analysis. “A ‘holistic’ approach should be adopted that identifies all hazards and events that could threaten the life safety or bring harm (death and injuries) to the citizenry, damage or destruction to structures and infrastructure, and economic loss to the community” (Hatch, 2000. p. 4). “A community cannot create response procedures unless they know what hazards may impact them” (Plan Development, 2003. p. 2).

To determine the hazards that should be contained in an EOP, an assessment should be made based on three criteria. A hazard is the potential harm or injury of an event, risk is the probability that an event will occur and exposure is the impact a risk has on persons or groups. “The assessment of hazards, exposure, and risk may be considered the first of three phases of decision making required for devising effective emergency response policies and procedures that form the basis of the emergency response or action plan” (Erickson, 1999. p. 29).

Determining what hazards may affect a community also affect decisions regarding funding for mitigation and planning. “An objective and realistic risk assessment also contributes to budget preparation and justification by providing clear and dependable resource allocation guidelines” (Leading, 2003. p. SM 2-59).

#### Procedures

The desired outcome of this research was to develop an action plan to develop an Emergency Operations Plan for the City of Riverside. To reach this goal, research was conducted through literature review, feedback instrument and personal contacts. This data was analyzed and utilized to develop an action plan that outlines the process by which an effective EOP can be developed for the City of Riverside.

The research questions developed were utilized to reveal current process by which an effective EOP is developed. The focus of the research was not only the steps in developing an EOP, but also the people that should be involved in the development process.

Literature review was used to collect data from national, state and local sources. Disaster planning programs from emergency management agencies at county, state and federal levels were explored for relevant information. Literature showing private sector and business based emergency planning was researched as it applied to municipal emergency planning.

Parameters were set to evaluate information from emergency planners from jurisdictions of various sizes. Emergency planners representing both city and county government were utilized. The one requirement was that planners had to have an EOP in force for the data to be relevant. The target goal was reached.

The relevant data collected was evaluated to determine what process would fulfill the goal of developing an effective EOP for the City of Riverside.

### *Research Methodology*

Action research methodology was utilized to develop an action plan. The procedures used to reach the desired outcome were literature review, feedback instrument and personal communications.

Research questions were developed to attain information regarding EOPs from all different types of jurisdictions. State and federal laws were reviewed to determine the roles and responsibilities of the city as well as any legislated content of an EOP. Standards in EOP content and structure were reviewed from both public and private sources. Questions were also used to determine the steps in developing the plan as well as who should be involved in the planning process.

A feedback instrument was developed in an effort to gather information about EOPs that are being used in various jurisdictions. These questions focused on plan structure, the planning team, and hazard determination. The feedback instrument can be found in Appendix B.

The feedback instrument was distributed to local jurisdictions as well as jurisdictions from across the United States. 15 feedback instruments were distributed to local jurisdictions in the Montgomery County, Ohio area. 40 feedback instruments were distributed to jurisdictions

throughout the United States. The request was made to have the feedback instrument completed by the person responsible for emergency management planning.

Based on the answers to the feedback instrument, six jurisdictions were selected for a follow-up interview. This interview was needed to gain more detailed information on the planning process for developing and EOP. No formal interview questions were developed. Questions for the follow-up interview varied based on the responses from the feedback instrument.

Three interviews were also conducted with county and state emergency planners. These interviews were in an effort to gather information on the history behind EOP development. It was also to gain clarification on state and federal standards and laws and how they affect the requirements of a local EOP.

The research for literature review began at the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy in September 2004. Other sources of potential supporting research were searched at the Dayton Public Library, through the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management as well as the Internet. These locations were successful at providing relevant and timely sources for literature review.

Reference material was selected based on relevance to the research topic and timeliness of the publication. Only references that were published since 1996 were utilized to be able to obtain the latest and most relevant material available.

#### *Assumptions and Limitations*

It is assumed that data collected from the private sector sources can be relevant. The perspective of the private sector tends to be more focused on minimizing the loss of revenue and

business survival in a disaster. It is assumed that the private sector disaster planning principles are applicable to public disaster planning.

A limitation is that an individual involved in the planning process of their original EOP document did not provide the data collected during this research. Although the data providers were very knowledgeable of their EOP, most were not involved in the planning process of their EOP. The data collected from these individuals is still determined to be relevant because they understand the EOP developmental process.

It can be assumed that the data collected in this research paper can be applied to other jurisdictions desiring to develop an EOP.

#### *Definition of Terms*

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) – “A document that identifies the available personnel, equipment, facilities, supplies, and other resources in the jurisdiction and the methods or scheme for coordinated actions to be taken by individuals and government services in the event of an emergency” (Montgomery County, 2003. p. BP-8-4).

Emergency Support Function (ESF) – “A functional area of response activity established to facilitate the delivery of assistance required during immediate public safety” (Montgomery County, 2003. p. BP-8-4).

#### **Results**

Of the departments that responded to the feedback instrument, only one did not have an EOP in force. That feedback instrument was not included in the results because it did not meet the minimum requirements of the procedures.

Of the 40 feedback instruments that were distributed nation-wide, 18 were returned and validated. Of the 15 feedback instruments that were distributed locally, eight were returned and validated. This gives a 47% response rating to the feedback instrument.

The focus of this research was the development of a local EOP. Respondents to the feedback instrument were asked if they had a local or county plan. 66% of responded that they had a local plan. It was expected that a higher percentage would have been local plans and not county plans. Further investigation found that most that followed county plans provided daily emergency services at a county or regional level.

*Question 1 - What federal and state standards should be followed in developing an Emergency Operations Plan?*

The results of the research showed a consistent awareness of current federal and state standards and laws governing the development of EOPs. All interviewees cited “SLG-101: Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning” as the guiding document in the development of an EOP. Local emergency planners also cited the State of Ohio document “Plan Development and Review Guidance for Local Emergency Operations Plans” as a document of choice in Ohio.

Between these two documents, interviewees identified five distinct steps in the development of an EOP that should be followed by a planning team. These steps include:

1. Completing a hazard analysis
2. Conducting a capability assessment
3. Reviewing existing plans/procedures
4. Writing the plan
5. Revising the plan

Jeff Jordan, the Assistant Director of the Office of Emergency Management in Montgomery County, stated that this process is “a good process to develop an effective EOP”. The biggest challenge by local emergency planners was having the necessary time and personnel to complete and maintain an EOP.

Candis Sherry, an Emergency Management Specialist with the State of Ohio Emergency Management Agency, said that the “State of Ohio guide assumes that a emergency manager would assign personnel to complete the first three phases” of the development process. That is why the guide does not mention organizing a planning team until after the data is collected and the plan is ready to be written. She agrees that at the local level, the planning team could be formed at the beginning of the process and complete all the necessary tasks. This team would need to be guided by an emergency manager or a planning coordinator.

Interviewees revealed that annual training with the EOP is necessary for several reasons. One is to keep all personnel fresh as to their areas of responsibility with the plan. It is also to review the plan and revise it as necessary based on organizational needs and changes in law requirements. Chief Follick from Vandalia Fire Department, Ohio stated that his city “will be conducting an annual table-top training with the plan to keep people refreshed”.

Tom Mefferd is the Director of Emergency Management for DuPage County, Illinois. He stated that the “Stafford Act is the basis of support for local EOPs”. The federal government does not have an EOP to respond to local disasters. The Stafford Act makes federal resources available to the local level as long as an EOP is in place.

One interviewee stated that the Ohio Administrative Code requires local jurisdictions to have an EOP. Further investigation found that local jurisdictions have two options regarding the



development of an EOP. They may elect to develop their own at the local level, or adopt their county plan to be compliant with Ohio law.

Several respondents stated that they have the current challenge of updating their EOP to come into compliance with the National Incident Management System. Here again the challenge is not the desire to update their plans, but to have the time and personnel to accomplish this task. Since this is a federal mandate, it will need to be updated this year.

*Question 2 - What framework should be used in the design of an Emergency Operations Plan?*

Respondents to the feedback instrument were asked two different questions regarding the framework of an EOP. One was if they followed an original format, or if they follow the “Basic/Annex/Appendix format”. 81% responded that they followed the “Basic/Annex/Appendix format”. Only four respondents stated that they had a format that did not follow SLG 101.

The second question that was asked was if emergency planners believed it was important and helpful for a local EOP to be in the same format at the county and state EOP. 85% responded that they believed that it was important and helpful. Three respondents stated that it did not matter.

Most interviewees shared the belief that consistency in format and terminology between state, county and local plans is important. Chief Jim Nickel from the Brookville Fire Department, Ohio stated, “It is imperative that the formats be the same.” It is understood that the actual content of the plan will vary between jurisdictions, but that a standard format and terminology will reduce confusion when assistance is received from outside agencies.

Chief David Fulmer from Miami Township Fire Department, Ohio did not share in the majority response. He stated that the local plan should be written to the “needs of the local

responder.” He believes that it is not essential that the local EOP be in the same format as the county plan.

*Question 3 - Who should be involved in the development of an Emergency Operations Plan?*

Responses to this question varied based on government structure and if emergency response agencies are local or regional. Some jurisdictions have sufficient size and capability that they have a dedicated emergency manager or office of emergency management.

Tom Mefferd was involved in developing a manual for developing crisis plans for businesses in DuPage County, Illinois. He stated that one of the first things that needs to be done in the planning process is “establishing the planning team.” This team is responsible for all the steps necessary to develop the emergency management plan. This team obtains input from all functional areas of the business and incorporates that into the development of the plan.

Chief Follick from Vandalia Fire Department, Ohio stated that the “fire department initiated the development of our plan.” But he strongly advises to get all city departments involved in the development of the plan. This will allow for a better evaluation of city capabilities and determine what outside resources might be needed during a disaster.

Although the development of the plan is conducted at the local level, it is still important to research available resources from outside the local jurisdiction. A disaster is something that is out of the ordinary and will probably require assistance beyond local capabilities. Chief Alderman from Lewisville Fire Department, North Carolina stated that he failed to include “local county volunteer Fire Chief’s or representatives from county volunteer Fire Chief’s Association” when their plan was developed. He cited this as a weakness of their plan and would include them in future revisions.

*Question 4 - What specific emergencies should be included in an Emergency Operations Plan?*

A consistent response to this question is that an all-hazard risk analysis should be conducted to determine which emergencies should be included in an EOP. This analysis is to include both natural and man-made disasters that may affect the community.

The process by which this analysis is completed varies by jurisdiction. When an EOP response is on a county or regional level, the office of emergency management or the director of emergency management was utilized. Local emergency planners may assign an individual or form a committee to complete the analysis.

But local emergency planners may not need to do all this work. In Montgomery County, Ohio this work has already been done at the county level. Jeff Jordan stated, “A comprehensive risk analysis has been done by the county and is available to local jurisdictions.” Local emergency planners evaluate this data to develop a risk analysis for their local jurisdiction.

*Discussion*

It has been found that there is a federal and state standard process that can be followed to develop an effective EOP for the City of Riverside. This will allow the City of Riverside to come into compliance with Ohio Revised Code 5502.27.1(B) and the “Robert T. Stafford Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.”

“SLG-101 – Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning” was found to be the nationally accepted guide for developing an EOP. This researcher found it interesting that both local and national respondents agreed to this standard. Local respondents further agreed that the State of Ohio guide complimented SLG-101 and should be used as the guide for emergency planners in the State of Ohio (Plan Development, 2003. p. 1).

This researcher believes that the first step in the development of an EOP for the City of Riverside is assigning a planning coordinator and organizing a planning team. The Ohio guidance suggests that the planning team need not be organized until the plan is ready to be drafted (Plan Development, 2003. p. 1). Since the City of Riverside does not have an emergency manager, it is perfectly acceptable and recommended that a planning coordinator and planning team be assigned prior to the development of the EOP. This is further supported by SLG-101 and the DuPage County business guidance documents.

As a result of this research, seven steps were identified as an effective planning process of developing an EOP. These are:

1. Assign a planning coordinator and organizing a planning team
2. Complete a hazard analysis
3. Conduct a capability assessment
4. Review existing laws, plans and procedures
5. Write the plan
6. Exercise the plan
7. Revise the plan

The most recent influence on the development of an EOP is the passage of the National Incident Management System legislation. This researcher believes it has become a major component in the development and revision of all EOPs. It serves to standardize incident management and for emergency managers to work together better regardless of the emergency (National Incident, 2004; National Response, 2004. p.1).

Several formats were cited in this research that could be used as the framework for an EOP. One format comes from SLG-101 (1996. p. 2-11; Plan Development, 2003. p. 8) giving

some basic components that have been used for many years. Three others were noted from the State of Ohio guide that each have their own strengths and weaknesses (Plan Development, 2003. p. 12, 14).

This researcher believes that the ESF format is the best framework that should be used in the development of an EOP for the City of Riverside. It best facilitates assistance from state and federal agencies (Montgomery, 2003. p. BP-1). Since the Federal Response Plan, the Ohio EOP, and the Montgomery County, Ohio EOP all follow the ESF format, it would be prudent that the City of Riverside follow the same. The majority of respondents concur with this belief that an EOP in the same format at all levels of government would be beneficial during a disaster.

An emergency planner must quickly realize that developing an EOP is not a one-person job. The research supports the fact that it takes a team of planners from a jurisdiction to develop an effective EOP (Hatch, 2000. p. 2; SLG-101, 1996. p. 2-2). The planning team should be made up of a representative from every department in the organization and elected officials. This planning team must also work with the whole community to plan effectively for an emergency response (Fagel, 2000. p.7). An emergency planner who attempts to develop an EOP on his own will be ineffective (NRT-1, 2001. p. 15).

An all-hazard analysis of a jurisdiction is necessary to determine potential disasters that may occur and the impact these hazards will have on life and property (Hatch, 2000. p. 4; Plan Development, 2003. p. 2). Identification of these hazards also allows for financial planning (Leading, 2003. p. SM 2-59). The final assessment of these hazards is necessary for the development of an effective EOP (Erickson, 1999. p. 29).

This researcher revealed that a comprehensive all-hazard analysis does not have to be conducted by every jurisdiction. In Montgomery County, Ohio, the Office of Emergency

Management has conducted and maintains a current all-hazard assessment for the county. The City of Riverside can utilize this resource in reviewing this data in the development of their EOP thus saving time and cost.

### *Recommendations*

The City of Riverside should develop an Emergency Operations Plan for the city to come into compliance with state law. It will also meet the requirements of the Stafford Act to allow for federal assistance if needed. The proposed action plan on how the city should proceed with the development of this plan can be found in Appendix A.

The State of Ohio planning guide is the most current and comprehensive document that will assist in the development of an EOP. It provides guidance for a process that has been modified to meet the needs of the City of Riverside. The process is as follows:

1. Assign a Planning Coordinator and organize a Planning Team
2. Complete a hazard analysis
3. Conduct a capability assessment
4. Review existing laws, plans and procedures
5. Write the plan
6. Exercise the plan
7. Revise the plan

It compliments SLG-101, which is the nationally recognized standard of guidance for developing an EOP.

As the EOP is developed, a critical component that must be addressed is the incident command system. The National Incident Management System is a federal mandate that must be incorporated into the development of the EOP.

The EOP should be structured to follow the ESF format. Although other formats could be used, the ESF format was found to be the current standard format at the county, state and federal levels. Using a standard format and terminology in the planning of an EOP will reduce confusion from outside agencies that may come in to assist during a disaster.

The hazard analysis that is available from Montgomery County should be utilized in the development of an EOP. It provides with the most current data on hazards that may affect the county. Not all of the county's data needs to be incorporated into the Riverside EOP. Only hazards that affect the City of Riverside will need to be addressed in the local EOP.

A planning team should be formed to develop the city's EOP. The planning team should be composed of representatives from each department of the city as well as city council. Assistance and input should also be included from both public and private agencies and organizations that may be affected by a disaster or may be able to assist during a disaster. Assistance should be requested from the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management to provide guidance and review of the city's plan.

The plan should be reviewed and trained with on a regular basis. Once the EOP is developed, the city personnel should receive training on the contents of the plan and their responsibilities during a disaster. This is to be done on an annual basis to keep people oriented to the plan and to identify any weaknesses of the plan. Lessons learned during training sessions, as well as changes in standards and laws should be incorporated into revisions of the plan.

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## Appendix A

***RIVERSIDE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
MEMORANDUM***

March 24, 2005

**TO:** James Onello, City Manager  
**FROM:** Bob Turner, Battalion Chief  
**SUBJECT:** Emergency Operations Plan Recommendation

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**ISSUE:** The City of Riverside Fire Department needs to develop an Emergency Operations Plan to come into compliance with State of Ohio Law.

**BACKGROUND:** Currently, the City of Riverside does not have an Emergency Operations plan and relies solely on the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management to respond in the event of a disaster in the city. But the city has never passed legislation recognizing the county as the responding agency, nor have they developed a local Emergency Operations Plan, which violates State of Ohio law.

**DISCUSSION:** I have conducted a literature review, received feedback from 26 agencies and conducted nine interviews with emergency managers from local, county and state agencies. This research was done as apart of a research paper for the Executive Fire Officer Program through the National Fire Academy. I have concluded that a local Emergency Operations Plan should be developed for the city. I have also revealed an effective process to follow in the development of the plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The City of Riverside should develop and adopt a local Emergency Operations Plan based on the following process:

1. Assign a Planning Coordinator and organize a Planning Team
  - a. Planning Coordinator appointed by City Manager
  - b. Planning Team assembled by Planning Coordinator
2. Complete a hazard analysis
  - a. Obtain Montgomery County hazard analysis data
  - b. Analyze data to determine hazards that will affect Riverside
3. Conduct a capability assessment
4. Review existing laws, plans and procedures
5. Write the plan
  - a. Plan to be written in Emergency Support Function (ESF) format
  - b. Format and terminology to follow Montgomery County EOP as applicable
6. Exercise the plan
  - a. Initial exercise to validate the plan
  - b. Annual exercise to review plan and train personnel
7. Revise the plan
  - a. Corrections made following initial exercise
  - b. Revisions made as needed based on law changes and lessons learned

## Appendix B



## Developing an Emergency Operations Plan for the Riverside Fire Department, Ohio

### Feedback Instrument

1. Is your current Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) written for your specific jurisdiction or for a regional/county level?  
 \_\_\_\_\_local plan      \_\_\_\_\_county plan      \_\_\_\_\_no plan
  
2. Do you believe it is important for an EOP to be written for a local jurisdiction or is a county plan sufficient?  
 \_\_\_\_\_local                      \_\_\_\_\_county
  
3. Does your EOP follow the Basic Plan, Functional Annexes with Hazard Appendices format or was your plan developed in an original format?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Basic/Annex/Appendix format      \_\_\_\_\_original format
  
4. Do you believe it is important and helpful for a local EOP to be in the same format as your county and state EOP?  
 \_\_\_\_\_Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_No, doesn't matter
  
5. Please list the main individuals involved in the development of your EOP?  
 (i.e. government officials, police chief, fire chief, emergency management director, finance director, etc.)

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6. Was there anyone that was not involved in the development of your EOP that should have been included? Who would that be?
  
7. How did you determine which specific emergencies should be included in your EOP?

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Person Completing Feedback Instrument

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Years of Service